

INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY El Salvador

DATE DISTR. 17 Nov. 1948

SUBJECT Political Picture in El Salvador
25X1A

NO. OF PAGES 2

**PLACE
ACQUIRED**NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

5X1
DATE OF INFO 28 October 1948

**SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.**

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT 60 U. S. C. 31 AND 32, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED. HOWEVER, INFORMATION CONTAINED IN BODY OF THE FORM MAY BE UTILIZED AS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE RECEIVING AGENCY.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION FOR THE RESEARCH
USE OF TRAINED INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

SOURCE

1. On 28 October, General Salvador Pena Trejo of El Salvador predicted that the country was headed for a revolution precipitated by trouble arising from the January 1949 elections. He said that the people were becoming indignant over the methods being used by the government candidate, General Mauro Espinola, whose election is virtually assured. Pena Trejo described how the canton commanders and other officials of the 1,800 cantons of the country had obtained thousands of signatures by threats and the use of force. In the country towns farm laborers have been rounded up, put in jail, and their machetes, their only piece of property, taken away. They are released only on a promise to sign away their votes for Espinola. Espinola was also reported to be using government funds and printing presses in his campaign. 25X1A
2. As reported in [redacted], plans are progressing for the formation of a coalition against Espinola by all other presidential candidates. Pena Trejo recently declared that each candidate would enter the coalition as soon as he felt his personal support to be strong enough to win after Espinola was eliminated from the political picture.
3. Pena Trejo, for example, stated that he, at the moment, was not quite ready. He had built his party to 150,000 strong, but he wanted to indoctrinate the Army with his plan for Army reform. He estimated that about two weeks would be necessary to accomplish this. Col. Jose Ascencio Menendez would join a coalition at any time, as he already has his popular support behind him. Pena Trejo admitted that Col. Menendez had the greatest popular support in numbers of any candidate. Col. Aguirre has already indicated his desire to join a coalition. Claramount and Orantes do not count as candidates, but they would be invited as a courtesy.
4. Pena Trejo indicated that the other candidates desire him to take the initiative in this matter. He had not as yet definitely made up his mind whether a coalition should be formed. In all probability, the one who would benefit most from the elimination of Espinola would be Col. Menendez. This, according to Pena Trejo, could not be permitted because of Col. Menendez' Communist affiliations and because of his connections with President Arevalo of Guatemala. However, Pena Trejo expected the coalition to develop. He predicted a coup d'etat on the part of the Army to eliminate Col. Menendez, but even this, he stated, would be difficult because Menendez is himself an Army man.

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL

[illegible]

Document No.

Document No. 4
NO CHANGE in Class. ☒

☐ DECLASSIFIED

☐ DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C

DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

25X1th: DDA REG. 77/17

Date: 10 MAY 1978

Approved For Release 2003/12/10 : CIA-RDP82-00457R002000760002-8

CIA LIBRARY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1A

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

-2-

5. Pena Trejo said he did not feel that all the candidates would withdraw, leaving the election to Espinola. He added he felt sure there would be violence before election time. He said that a coup d'etat could be engineered at any moment if he or even Col. Aguirre were willing to take the responsibility, although he, himself, did not wish to do so. Ninety percent of the three hundred younger officers would cooperate immediately, and the present regime would be powerless against such determined effort. Pena Trejo attributed his reluctance to assume leadership to the fact that although he would win in El Salvador, he would "lose internationally."

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL